



Geebung Bowls Club

STORY JULIA LEWIS

The history of the Geebung Bowls Club

In 1962, a group of keen bowlers gathered at the local church hall on Innes St, Geebung, to play indoor bowls. While this venue was suitable for hosting their social games, after much discussion, the group decided to pursue a venue of their own.

With the assistance of Alderman Frank Sleeman, the group of 21 founding members submitted an application to the RQBA for the necessary affiliation and were eventually successful in securing land for their very own bowling club. On June 24, 1964, the inaugural meeting of the Geebung Bowls Club was held in the Geebung-Zillmere RSL hall, and although membership at the time was small, they began planning their new club.

In their first year, the founding members managed to clear the land and after raising £1200.00, they began designing their first bowling green.

Harry Cross was appointed Club President and had organised a loan so that the green could be constructed. At a cost of approximately £4,300, the green was constructed under the supervision

of Verge Meyers. As a result, the first green was named the "Verge Meyers Green", in his honour.

It was soon after this that a Ladies club was founded, having their initial meeting in the residence of Mrs Whittaker, Bayview Terrace, Geebung, and Edna Wilson was appointed the first Madame President.

On December 10 1966, members were able to play on their own green for the very first time and although there was no clubhouse, President Harry Cross arranged a marquee under which they could enjoy their morning tea.

The official opening was arranged for August 1967 and it was soon after that the club realised that membership was growing to such an extent, a second green was required. In 1973 after securing neighbouring land, a second green was constructed.

Fast forward 4 decades, the club is going strong and has become the central meeting point for the community hosting not only bowls, but dance classes, markets, bingo, card clubs and live music.

In early 2022, the club decided that while the Verge Meyers Green was an important part in the club's history, it was time to rename the green to honour two club members, Fay and Novar Newton, who had spent countless hours contributing to the club, and volunteering their time.

Photo credit with thanks to the Geebung Bowls Club



THE ROYAL EXCHANGE HOTEL

The history of Aspley's favourite drinking hole.

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The Royal Exchange Hotel first opened in 1875. William Wallin, the original owner and a major landowner in the area, opened the hotel after gold was discovered in nearby Gympie in 1867. The discovery of gold meant that Gympie Road became the main route out of Brisbane so Wallin decided to have both a hotel with bar facilities, and a general store that would accommodate the increase in traffic.

The original building was a low blocked building with a shingle roof and stood on the site that is on the southern side of the existing 'Aspley Hotel'. Farmers from nearby farms in Dayboro and Petrie would stay at the hotel as a midway stop while travelling by German Wagon to the farmers markets in Brisbane.

Meals were cooked and served from the detached main building. Overnight accommodation could be arranged at the hotel, and the general store, called 'Royal Exchange', stocked most household goods including milk, newspapers, flour and other pantry staples. At one stage, the store even sold sewing machines.

In 1897, the district of Little Cabbage Tree Creek became known as Aspley after residents in the community petitioned to have the name changed.

It was soon after this that the Royal Exchange Hotel became a central meeting place for the community and frequently held events that brought everyone together. Wallin was determined to have his establishment host the best and most community spirited celebrations. He would host card competitions where patrons could win a dressed duck, Christmas time would see patrons feast on bullock that had been roasted on a spit and New Year's celebrations consisted of dancing, bonfires and Chinese fireworks.

William Wallin died in 1919 and after the hotel was run by several publicans, the lease was taken over by Hannah Redmond, a widow from Brisbane, who eventually purchased the hotel in 1924.

The Royal Exchange Hotel was rebuilt in 1934 and kept its original name until 1958 when it was renamed, Aspley Hotel, which it is still known by today.

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The Royal Exchange Hotel, circa 1925